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HEIDELBERG, KARACHI, KHARTOUM, KUWAIT, LONDON FOR CINCNELM,*

FROM : Amembassy, JIDDA DATE: February 23, 1965

DATE: February 23, 1965

SUBJECT : Joint Weeka No. 8 (for the week ending ~~February, 22, 1965~~)

REF :

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GROUP FOUR

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POLITICAL/ECONOMIC

3. Parsons-Frank Basil Water Survey Contract Signed. The long-delayed signing of a contract for the survey of the Kingdom's water and agricultural resources in the Wadi Sirhan and the Qasim areas took place on February 15 between the Minister of Agriculture and the American firms "Ralph Parsons Company" and "Frank Basil." The survey is to be completed in 42 months and the total cost of the contract is announced as \$7.5 million. Negotiations are still continuing with the French-Italian combine, "Sogreah-Italoconsult,"

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for a similar contract covering central areas of the Kingdom. The Saudi Government has not yet called for survey proposals in the southern areas of the country. (UNCLASSIFIED)

COMMENT: The Saudi Government might have been two years ahead on this critical project if the recommendations of Harold FOLK, former Chief Advisor to the Supreme Planning Board, had been followed. As matters now stand, at least four years will elapse before the studies are completed and many more months will pass before water can be made available for agriculture. In the meantime the migration of Bedouin and villagers to the cities will probably continue. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

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5. Saudi Arabia Signs COMSAT Agreement. Together with nine other governments, including Tunisia, Algeria, and the UAR, Saudi Arabia signed up for shares in the Communications Satellite Corporation on February 19.

(UNCLASSIFIED)

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PSYCHOLOGICAL

2. Snowdon Affair. Both Ukaz and an-Nadwa on February 18 headlined reports from Damascus concerning the alleged American spy ring and the expulsion of U.S. Embassy Second Secretary Walter SNOWDON. There has been no mention of the subject in the press since that day. (UNCLASSIFIED)

COMMENT: A USIS local employee was told by two Saudi newspaper editors that they planned to publish considerable comment on the "Snowdon Affair," tying the Syrian allegations to U.S. involvement in the West German sale of arms to Israel as evidence of U.S. "plotting against the Arabs." So far, however, these threatened attacks on U.S. policy have failed to materialize

3. German-Arab Relations. German-Arab relations continued to be featured in the Saudi press. Most press commentary took as its theme the Arab victory in forcing Bonn to cancel its military sales agreement with Israel. Ex-Chancellor ADENAUER's statement that it was the U.S. which forced West Germany into the arms deal with Israel was given a front-page headline in al-Madina which also carried a cartoon depicting President Johnson arguing with Chancellor ERHARD on behalf of Israel. A few commentators, like al-Bilad's Zaid bin FAYYADH, urged the Arabs to follow up their success against West Germany by directing their attention against other countries that stand against Arab aspirations. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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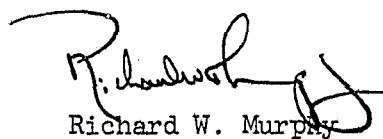
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COMMENT: Although the U.S. role in the German-Israel arms deal has been referred to in the local press, ~~direct~~ attacks by the press on the U.S. have been few and mostly of an indirect nature. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

4. Vietnam. In an unusually balanced commentary, Bilad's Sulaiman QADHI, who has often been critical of U.S. foreign policy, summed up the situation in Vietnam by pointing out that suggestions for the neutralization of Vietnam fail to take into account the fact that when the Communists speak of neutrality and non-alignment, they are speaking only of South Vietnam and that the Communists will not agree to the neutralization of North Vietnam until all U.S. military bases in the Far East are dismantled. This, Qadhi noted, could not be easily accepted because the absence of American military influence in the area means that the whole of Southeast Asia would drift towards Communism. An-Nadwa commentator expressed concern that the seemingly unified attitude of the USSR and Communist China on the Vietnam problem might lead to closer intra-Bloc cooperation in other parts of the world as well.
(UNCLASSIFIED)

FOR THE AMBASSADOR:


Richard W. Murphy
Second Secretary of Embassy

INFO CONTINUED: RABAT, TAIZ, TEHERAN, POLAD CINCSTRIKE/CINCMEAFSA, CHUSMTM, COMIDEASTFOR, USMTM AIR FORCE SECTION, USMTM ARMY SECTION, NOUAKCHOTT, TOKYO.

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